



REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1-4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,194,676 to Takahashi et al. (hereinafter "Takahashi").

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Claim 1 has been amended to place the application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, claims 1-4 are presently pending.

The Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Takahashi. As an initial matter, for the record, Applicant respectfully notes that the Office Action quoted the previous version of claim 1 before the amendment by Applicant in Applicant's previous response. Nevertheless, Applicant traverses these rejections for at least the following reasons.

Firstly, the Office Action states that Takahashi discloses a lever apparatus comprising, in part, "[a] mounting part (7) projecting from the inner surface of the cover part." Applicant respectfully submits that, at best, Takahashi is silent as to a mounting part projecting from the inner surface of the cover part. The Office Action appears to relate operating member 7 in Takahashi to "a mounting part" recited in claim 1. However, nowhere does Takahashi disclose operating member 7 even touching or having any relationship to the **inner surface** of the cover

part. Therefore, Takahashi cannot and does not disclose the mounting part “projecting **from the inner surface** of the cover part...,” as recited in amended claim 1 (emphasis added).

Secondly, Applicant has amended claim 1 to better describe the relationship between the mounting part and the inner surface of the cover part. Applicant respectfully submits that Takahashi does not teach at least “a mounting part **fixedly** projecting from the inner surface of the cover part...,” as recited in amended claim 1 (emphasis added). As seen in Figure 1 of Takahashi, operating member 7 is completely separate from operating lever 3. Therefore, it cannot be “fixedly projecting from the inner surface of the cover part...,” as required by amended claim 1. Furthermore, as seen from page 2, lines 9-22 of the present application, the claimed invention is directed towards solving a problem that is particular to the mounting part being “fixedly projecting from the inner surface of the cover part” that is not found in turn signal switch device of Takahashi.

As pointed out in MPEP § 2131, “[t]o anticipate a claim, the reference must teach every element of the claim.” Thus, “[a] claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference. Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California, 2 USPQ 2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987).”

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of independent claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) be withdrawn. Furthermore, Applicant respectfully submits that dependent claims 2-4 are allowable at least because of their dependency from independent claim 1 and the reasons set forth above.

Conclusion

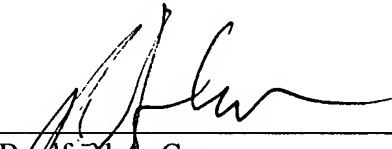
In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and the timely allowance of the pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of the response, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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